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United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme carried out by the Office for Disarmament Affairs in the priority areas of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, in particular small arms and light weapons. The Programme continues to publish print and electronic versions of the two-part *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, which are available on its website. The website of the Office (www.un.org/disarmament) has continued to grow in relevance and importance and was revamped during the reporting period. It is currently available in all six official languages of the United Nations. It is an important repository of information where Member States, conference participants, non-governmental organizations and the general public can access daily updates of documents and statements, including video messages. The Office will continue to facilitate the participation of civil society in disarmament-related meetings and conferences and collaborate closely with non-governmental organizations. The present report also provides details on the many contributions of the Department of Public Information to the dissemination of information on disarmament.

* A/71/50.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 69/71, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its seventy-first session a report covering both the implementation of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme by the United Nations system during the previous two years and the activities of the Programme contemplated for the following two years. The Programme is administered by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in close collaboration with the Department of Public Information, in particular on information campaigns focused on major disarmament-related events and conferences.

2. The objectives of the Programme reflect the overall orientation of the Office, guided by the priorities of Member States, as set out in the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly.

3. In accordance with the objectives set out in the previous report on the Programme (A/69/134), the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs has continued his advocacy of disarmament and non-proliferation issues with Member States and civil society and continued to increase his interaction with the media, think tanks, academia and civil society organizations that play a vital role in building and activating public opinion in respect of disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

4. In the area of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, especially nuclear weapons, priority was accorded to the seventh Ministerial Meeting of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in New York on 26 September 2014, and the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in New York from 27 April to 22 May 2015. These events entailed an increased demand for information by the diplomatic community, international and civil society organizations, the media and the general public.

5. In the area of conventional weapons, priority was accorded to the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty on 24 December 2014, the first Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, held in Mexico City from 24 to 27 August 2015, and the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 6 to 10 June 2016. The Office was again required to mobilize resources to meet the demand for information from various sectors.

6. The Office's website has grown in importance and prominence in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, as evidenced by increased traffic and time spent by visitors on the site. In addition, a revamped version of the website was launched on 19 May 2016 in all six official languages of the United Nations. It responds to the demands of current technologies, given that it adapts to fit multiple screen sizes, including those of tablets and mobile devices. It was produced with help from the Office of Information and Communications Technology, the Department of Public Information and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. Dedicated webpages were created for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and for the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, which is commemorated on 26 September each year.

7. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 69/65, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report reviewing the results of the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124) and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventy-first session (A/71/174). That report should be read in conjunction with the present one.

8. In a series of resolutions adopted at its sixty-ninth and seventieth sessions, the General Assembly reaffirmed the usefulness of the three regional centres for peace and disarmament — in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean — in carrying out dissemination and educational programmes. Separate reports to the Assembly on the three regional centres provide detailed information about their activities.

9. The United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services programme continues to be the largest annual training programme of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. Information on its activities is contained in the report on the fellowship (A/71/95).

10. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research continues to report to the General Assembly on its activities on a yearly basis. Accounts of the information and education activities of the Institute for the past two years are contained in separate reports (A/70/177 and A/71/162).

11. Funding for the Programme continues to be derived from the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources, in particular the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Programme. The status of the Trust Fund as at 31 December 2015 is contained in the annex to the present report. The Trust Fund continued to benefit from the generosity of Member States and private donors. The Office is grateful for the donations and support it has received, as listed in the annex to the present report.

II. Information resources

A. Publication programme

12. The *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook* remains the flagship publication of the Office. The English version of the *Yearbook* is made available to all United Nations delegations. It is distributed in two volumes, volume I on resolutions and decisions was disseminated during the proceedings of the Disarmament Commission, and volume II on the major disarmament issues of the past year was distributed to all delegations participating in the work of the First Committee. In addition, the United Nations bookshops sell several hundred copies of each edition to subscribers and non-subscribers. The *Yearbook* is also produced in electronic format, which is easily accessible on the Office's website. The *Yearbook* is also produced in PDF format, which features full-text search and navigation mechanisms. Electronic versions of the *Yearbook* have been available since 2002.

13. The Occasional Papers series was developed to give wider dissemination to the expert input from individuals, panels and seminars sponsored by the Office and is disseminated free of charge and posted on the website. The following have been issued during the period under review:

- Occasional Paper No. 26, June 2014, entitled *The New Zealand Lectures on Disarmament*.[1] This publication features six lectures delivered in New Zealand in April 2014 by the High Representative that delve into many of the challenges facing the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons and provide a comprehensive stocktaking of the prospects and challenges confronting disarmament and arms control efforts. The High Representative described both progress in some areas, most notably in the field of conventional arms, and a lack of progress in others, especially with regard to nuclear disarmament. The lectures were intended to inspire practical action and help to revive political will.

- Occasional Paper No. 27, December 2015, entitled *2015 Sessions of the Nuclear Discussion Forum*.[2] This publication contains the presentations made during the Nuclear Discussion Forum held on 24 March, 22 June and 17 November 2015 in New York. It is aimed at capturing the essence of the lively discussions and rich debates that took place and at sharing the insight presented at the Forum, where representatives of disarmament bodies worked on nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and security issues.

14. The Office has continued to produce UNODA Update, an e-publication that highlights recent events and activities at the United Nations and other disarmament forums, providing links to fuller material and documents available on both the Office's and related websites. Previously issued quarterly, the individual articles in the Update are now published on the website as soon as they become available, closer to real-time, but still collated by quarter.

15. The *Civil Society and Disarmament* series was established in 2010. During the reporting period, the following publications were produced:

- *The Importance of Civil Society in United Nations and Intergovernmental Processes: Views from Four Delegates to the United Nations*.[3] Four delegates from Australia, Costa Rica, Japan and Mexico, who worked at the United Nations, share their personal views in this publication on the impact civil society stakeholders have had in matters relating to disarmament and arms control.

- *Statements of Non-Governmental Organizations at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*.[4] This publication contains the statements made by representatives of non-governmental organizations delivered during the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

16. The Office continued to publish its study series, a publication produced in small quantities that highlights studies conducted by groups of governmental experts. In December 2015, study series No. 35, entitled *Study on a Treaty Banning the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons or Other Nuclear Explosive Devices*,[5] was published. This publication contains the report of the Group of Governmental Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for

[1] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.IX.8.
[2] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IX.4.
[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.15.IX.2.
[4] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IX.3.
[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IX.2.

nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (A/70/81), which held four sessions in 2014 and 2015. In its report, the Group outlined the details of its deliberations, characterized the range of expert views on the various aspects of such a treaty and presented its conclusions and recommendations. Also included for reference were the related General Assembly resolutions, the Shannon report and the views of Member States.

17. A booklet entitled, *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons* was published in December 2014. It provides a brief background and history on the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and its Protocols, interesting facts related to the Convention, information on how States can join and participate in the meetings related to the Convention and the mandate of and support provided by the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention. It is designed to be a guide for States that are considering becoming parties to the Convention and a useful resource for those working to promote universalization.

18. In cooperation with the Government of the Netherlands, the Office published *Disarmament and Related Treaties* in December 2014. This publication contains the multilateral treaties that focus on nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, conventional arms and nuclear-weapon-free zones, all of which are essential for promoting peace and security. It also includes treaties in which disarmament and non-proliferation are important elements within a larger framework of issues, such as the Antarctic Treaty or the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

19. With the support of the European Union, the Office published a *Guide to Participating in the Confidence-Building Measures of the Biological Weapons Convention* in April 2015. This guide provided practical advice and guidance to officials responsible for preparing submissions of confidence-building measures in support of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction.

20. In May 2015, *The Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical, Bacteriological (Biological) or Toxin Weapons (SGM): a lessons-learned exercise for the United Nations Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic* was published. This publication provides concrete conclusions and recommendations for strengthening the application of the Secretary-General's Mechanism, reinforced its added value and supported the conclusion that the mechanism was an effective, impartial and objective tool for the investigation of the alleged use of chemical or biological weapons.

21. A *Study on Armed Unmanned Aerial Vehicles* was prepared on the recommendation of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. Published in October 2015, with assistance from the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Human Rights Institute at the Columbia University School of Law, it examines the characteristics of unmanned aerial vehicles, how international law applies to the use of armed unmanned aerial vehicles to conduct targeted strikes outside areas of active hostilities and ideas for improving transparency, oversight and accountability in their development, acquisition, stockpiling, transfer and use. The primary conclusion of the study was a

recommendation for further study on unmanned aerial vehicles to be conducted under the auspices of the Institute with the assistance of a geographically representative group of experts.

22. In September 2015, the Office published and widely distributed the *Everyday Disarmament Cards*. The issues listed on the cards are core topics and concerns that the Office tackles regularly and that guide its efforts to provide substantive support to expert groups, organize seminars, prepare and disseminate publications, inaugurate exhibits, launch media events and promote outreach and advocacy.

23. In September 2015, *Programmes Financed from Voluntary Contributions 2014-2015* was published and widely disseminated. The report illustrates how the Office has been able to achieve specific results through partnerships with its donors and how essential such support is in attaining important disarmament goals. An updated edition is being prepared for the third quarter of 2016.

24. A feature on the Office's website is a series of concise, two-page fact sheets on various topics for which the Office is responsible. In 2015, 34 fact sheets were updated on a quarterly basis.

25. Although printed materials are still important media of communication, as access to the Internet and electronic media increases across the globe, the Office is making all of its publications available in electronic and downloadable formats.

B. Website

26. The Office continued to maintain and improve the substantive content and technical delivery of its website in order to reach a broader audience that includes both the general public and specialists in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation.

27. The number of visitors to the website remained high throughout 2015 and into 2016, averaging more than 50,000 visitors per month, whereas the number of page views remained steady from previous years at 100,000 per month. Website traffic tended to be highest during periods in which disarmament and non-proliferation issues were in news journals and garnering worldwide attention, such as the periods surrounding the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, in June 2014, and the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in April and May 2015.

28. The Office launched a revamped website on 19 May 2016 in all six official languages, which is available at www.un.org/disarmament. It meets the demands of current technologies, given that it adapts to fit multiple screen sizes, including those of tablets and mobile devices. Using the WordPress content management system, the website is able to be updated in real time, from anywhere in the world. It also has new security features, making it more effective at defending against malicious outside intrusion.

C. Exhibitions

29. Exhibitions played an important role in advocacy and in the provision of disarmament-related information at various conferences and other related events. The Office launched an exhibit of the 12 original winning artworks from the "Art for Peace" contest at Headquarters to mark the first observance of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September 2014.

30. To underscore the achievement of the fiftieth ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty, the non-governmental organization Control Arms launched a photo exhibit entitled "50 Celebrating 50", displayed online in English, French and Spanish, and in an installation at Headquarters in October 2014. The exhibit highlighted 50 people across governments, campaigners, public figures and armed violence survivors who have each played a unique and an important role in achievements related to the Treaty.

31. Discussions between the Department of Public Information and the Office on the installation of a new disarmament exhibit in the renovated General Assembly Building continued throughout the first half of 2015. In June 2015, the artefacts that had been in the Conference Building were moved back to the third floor of the General Assembly Building and an updated large electronic display on military expenditure was installed in the revamped disarmament section of the guided tour route and attracted substantial attention.

32. On 30 September 2015 the Office unveiled an exhibit to commemorate the second observance of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, observed annually on 26 September. It featured key statements from the eight past and current Secretaries-General of the United Nations, spanning 70 years, on the need for nuclear disarmament. The opening of the exhibit was followed by the meeting of the General Assembly on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

D. Events

33. During the period under review, there was significant media and civil society interest in a number of events, requiring information and outreach support in New York. These included, inter alia, the observances of the International Day against Nuclear Tests on 29 August and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September.

34. As part of its outreach efforts, the Office continued to organize and host a range of meetings, seminars and events, including:

- On 13 October 2014, on the margins of the first day of meetings of the First Committee during the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the Permanent Missions of Austria, Japan and Mexico to the United Nations, in cooperation with the Office, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the James Martin Center for Non-Proliferation Studies, organized a high-level event to discuss the progress and remaining challenges in promoting, implementing and expanding disarmament and non-proliferation education, entitled "Boosting Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education".

- Panellists called for more effective, gender-specific arms control policies at a discussion hosted by the Government of Australia, in association with the International Action Network on Small Arms Women's Network, the Global Alliance on Armed Violence and the Office. The 12 March 2015 event, entitled "Linking the Women, Peace and Security and Arms Control Agendas", was held in the margins of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

- At a side event to the 2015 session of the Disarmament Commission, held on 13 April 2015 at Headquarters, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute released its 2014 data on global military expenditures, which was followed by a discussion with a panel of experts. Hosted by the Institute and the Office with sponsorship from the Permanent Mission of Japan, the event aimed at not only providing an overview of trends in global arms spending but connecting these trends to recent developments in international peace and security.

- A documentary film series on nuclear disarmament was held in May, on the margins of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, sponsored by the Office. The series complemented the formal discussions on disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation under way at the conference. Four films that examine different issues related to nuclear disarmament were carefully selected to highlight the complexity of the issue. The screenings were open to the general public, which provided young people and other citizens with an opportunity to engage with one of the most important and least understood security issues facing our world.

- On 18 September 2015, the High Representative met with non-governmental organizations working in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. The aim of this meeting was to improve coordination and collaboration between non-governmental organizations and the Office. It was also an occasion to assess the advances that had been made and those that remained to be made in the field of disarmament. Ten non-governmental organizations were represented that day, and participants sketched out their main campaigns for the coming year.

- On 22 September 2015, the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations and the non-governmental organization UNFOLD ZERO, in cooperation with the Office and the Non-Governmental Organization Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security, organized a screening in Geneva of the film *The Man Who Saved the World*, in observance of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Some 90 representatives of Member States and civil society attended the event, which was part of a series of activities to enhance public awareness and education about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination, in order to mobilize international efforts towards achieving the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

- The Office organized an event on 3 May 2016 to showcase the winning posters from the 11 artists who won the United Nations Poster for Peace Contest. The contest was held in commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the first General Assembly resolution, which established the goal of eliminating atomic weapons and all other weapons adaptable to mass destruction.

35. More information on these and many other events held during the period under review is available as part of the UNODA Update series, available at www.un.org/disarmament/update.

E. Media

36. Throughout the reporting period, the High Representative and senior staff of the Office participated in interviews with several television, radio and print outlets. Media interest in disarmament was particularly focused on the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and ensuring its continued universal support. In addition, initiatives with regard to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons increasingly became an area of interest for the media. Many of the interviews of the High Representative are available in the "Spotlight" section of the Office's website.

37. The Office produced, in cooperation with United Nations Television, the documentary film *Weapons of Mass Destruction: Threats and Global Responses*, which has been disseminated through the United Nations Television series *21st Century* to more than 90 broadcast partners worldwide. A film commemorating the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) was produced in November 2014, using extrabudgetary funds from the Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities. Grants for the production of the film were made available from Kazakhstan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, the United States of America and the European Union.

38. During the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Office hosted screenings of the following films: *The Man Who Saved the World* directed by Peter Anthony (Denmark), *What Happened that Day* directed by Masaaki Tanabe (Japan), *In My Lifetime* directed by Robert Frye (United States) and *Countdown to Zero* directed by Lucy Walker (United States). The film series complemented the formal discussions on disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation under way at the conference. It aimed at sensitizing viewers to the present-day reality of the threats posed by the existence of nuclear weapons. United Nations staff, delegates, interns, representatives of non-governmental organizations and accredited media outlets and others participating at the conference were invited to attend. A website for the film series is available at www.nptfilms.org.

39. In addition, the Office's website was updated with video messages on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. The Secretary-General's video messages addressed such issues as the fourteenth Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, the twentieth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the fifty-ninth regular session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The High Representative's video messages were on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and on the Conference on Weapons of Mass Destruction, Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The Director of the

Office recorded a video message to the student-teacher conference of the Critical Issues Forum, held in Hiroshima, Japan, in the second quarter of 2015.

F. Education

40. The Office offered opportunities for young professionals to receive experience in the field of disarmament through the associate expert programme. In New York and Geneva, the Office mentored more than 30 graduate students through the 2015 internship programme.

41. The Office, in collaboration with Hibakusha Stories, a New York-based non-governmental organization that brings *hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivors) to New York City secondary schools to tell their stories, organized biannual briefings by *hibakusha* for United Nations tour guides and staff and interns of permanent mission.

42. On 4 November 2014 and 3 November 2015, the Office co-sponsored a workshop on nuclear disarmament for 30 teachers from New York City secondary schools as part of their continuing education activities. As part of its ongoing efforts on disarmament education, the Office organizes an annual workshop for secondary school teachers on nuclear disarmament to inform them about nuclear disarmament, the programmes available to their pupils and what the United Nations has been doing in that regard.

III. Information activities

A. Conferences, panel discussions and other information activities

43. With support from the Government of Japan, Hiroshima Prefecture and Hiroshima City, the Office, through the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, organized the twenty-fifth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, held in Hiroshima, Japan, from 26 to 28 August 2015. The Conference, with the overall theme "Creating a peaceful and safe future: pressing issues and potential solutions", addressed a number of important issues, including the humanitarian dimensions of nuclear weapons, nuclear-weapon-free zones, current situations and challenges to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, nuclear safety and security, small arms and light weapons control, the role of civil society in promoting disarmament and disarmament and non-proliferation education. Representatives of States, local governments, the United Nations and other inter-governmental organizations, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations, the media, secondary school pupils and university students attended the Conference.

44. Through the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, and in cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Office organized the thirteenth Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, held on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, on 4 and 5 December 2014. Under the theme "Looking ahead: opportunities and challenges in disarmament and non-proliferation", the Conference aimed to encourage frank, open and interactive discussion of relevant issues of

disarmament and security by bringing together stakeholders from different sectors of the disarmament and non-proliferation community, in particular governments, inter-governmental organizations, policy institutes, academia and other civil society organizations.

45. The fourteenth Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues was held in Seoul on 7 and 8 December 2015. An unprecedented number of more than 100 representatives from governments, intergovernmental organizations, policy institutes, non-governmental organizations and academia participated in the Conference. It was financed through voluntary contributions made to the Office by the Government of the Republic of Korea.

46. The meetings of the First Committee during the sixty-ninth and seventieth sessions of the General Assembly and the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons attracted a large number of side events organized separately and jointly by permanent missions to the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, think tanks, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Office. Additional information on many of these events is available on the Office's website.

B. Briefings

47. During the reporting period, staff members of the Office undertook briefing engagements, which focused on education and training activities involving a range of target audiences. Whereas most of the participants were student visitors from university programmes, other briefings were provided to members of national United Nations associations, junior diplomats and other foreign ministry personnel, secondary school teachers for continuing education and representatives of non-governmental organizations. Staff members also participated in panels and events on arms control, disarmament and security issues organized by research institutes, universities or think tanks.

C. Activities of the Messenger of Peace on disarmament

48. The Department of Public Information is the lead office for supporting the activities of the Messengers of Peace and acts in cooperation with the relevant substantive office, including the Office. During the period under review, Michael Douglas, whose special area of focus as Messenger of Peace is disarmament, made a number of contributions to supporting disarmament efforts, including the following:

- Mr. Douglas delivered a short video message on 25 September 2014 expressing his support for the Arms Trade Treaty, which he also promoted on his Facebook account.
- On 28 April 2015, he spoke at an academic symposium and high-level panel on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, entitled "Nuclear Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Energy: Fresh Ideas for the Future", held at Headquarters in connection with the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty.
- On 21 September 2015, the International Day of Peace, Mr. Douglas addressed students gathered at Headquarters and those connected via video link from the

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon on the theme "Partnerships for Peace, Dignity for All". He also conducted an interview with representatives of the news media platforms of the Department of Public Information, attended a luncheon with the Secretary-General and promoted the Day on Facebook.

- On 12 January 2016, Mr. Douglas took part in an informal dialogue with a group of disarmament non-governmental organizations at Headquarters, alongside the High Representative. On the same day, he recorded several video messages for the Office.

- In April 2016, Mr. Douglas recorded a video message as part of the call to action public service announcement produced by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to raise awareness about the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 and 24 May 2016.

IV. Cooperation with civil society, especially non-governmental organizations

49. The Office for Disarmament Affairs continues to facilitate the participation of non-governmental organizations (accreditation and registration) at various disarmament-related conferences, and to coordinate their side events and exhibits, as well as their presentations, in various disarmament meetings. It also provides sponsorship to enable non-governmental organizations to hold events during the meetings of the First Committee and promotes their activities on the Office's website. The Office holds frequent meetings with representatives of non-governmental organizations at the level of the High Representative and at the working level to discuss their programmes and examine ways to collaborate.

50. For the purpose of coordinating participation in major conferences, the Office continues to maintain close contact with two major coalitions of non-governmental organizations, Reaching Critical Will in the nuclear field and the International Action Network on Small Arms in connection with small arms and light weapons. Those coalitions are instrumental in facilitating the participation of civil society speakers in intergovernmental meetings on disarmament and non-proliferation.

51. In the area of small arms, 242 representatives from 46 non-governmental organizations participated in the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in June 2014. A total of 1,151 representatives from 102 non-governmental organizations participated in the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in April and May of 2015. Twenty-five representatives of non-governmental organizations participated in the Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which is a technical assessment of the Programme of Action.

V. Activities of the Department of Public Information

52. The Department of Public Information continued to build greater public awareness, understanding and support for the work of the United Nations in the areas of disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and related fields by promoting and covering the Organization's conferences, meetings, events and observances.

A. Internet, press coverage, television and radio

53. During the reporting period, the Department of Public Information focused on disarmament as one of its priority issues in its multilingual radio, television, print, online and photo outlets. The Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, in 2014, and the ninth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, in 2015, were widely covered by the entire team of United Nations Television, the Webcast Unit, United Nations Radio, the Meetings Coverage Section and the United Nations News Centre.

54. The 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission sessions were also widely covered by the same platforms.

55. The website for the 2015 Review Conference was created and maintained by the Web Services Section of the Department of Public Information, which worked closely on it with the Office. The Department also designed printed information materials in English and French, which were then distributed to the media and delegates who attended the conference.

56. The Web Services Section is in the process of redesigning the website of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) in all six official languages, in partnership with the Committee. In line with the existing agreement with the Department of Political Affairs, the Section has implemented more than 2,000 updates to the website in all six official languages during the reporting period.

57. United Nations Radio carried out interviews with senior officials across the full spectrum of disarmament-related issues, including the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, Lassina Zerbo, and the previous High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Angela Kane. Interviews were conducted in multiple languages and then adapted for use into other languages through voice-overs. United Nations Radio also ran stories on the meetings of the First Committee, the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference and the Disarmament Commission and the annual observances of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, the Day of Remembrance for All Victims of Chemical Warfare and the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. Efforts by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States to keep Latin America and the Caribbean a non-nuclear and non-conflict zone were also highlighted by United Nations Radio in programmes in English and Spanish. Other disarmament issues that were extensively covered included efforts to ban and eradicate the use of landmines and cluster bombs worldwide.

58. United Nations Radio produced stories in the six official languages and Kiswahili and Portuguese on marking the seventieth year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and on the United Nations efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament worldwide. It also covered stories on the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, including the formation of the joint inspection mechanism in the Syrian Arab Republic in August 2015, and stories on small arms. In addition, United Nations Radio covered the appearance of Messenger of Peace Michael Douglas at the global student observance of the International Day of Peace, held in September 2015 at Headquarters, at which he spoke about his role in raising awareness about disarmament issues and his hope that nuclear weapons could be eliminated during his lifetime.

59. The United Nations News Centre posted more than 275 stories on disarmament-related issues in multiple languages. Several feature items were produced, including an interview with the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, published online in May 2015, and an interview with the High Representative. The News Centre covered the Agency's first conference on cyber threats to nuclear safety, held in June 2015, and an event in April 2015 organized by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to mark the 100th year since the first use of chemical weapons. The drawdown of the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, in September 2014, was also covered. In addition, the response of the Security Council and the Agency to the agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and international negotiators on that country's nuclear programme was covered extensively during the reporting period.

60. The features section of United Nations Television continued to work closely with the Office in producing spots, news stories, features, B-rolls and other information materials on various issues related to disarmament, prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and illicit sales of small arms. More than 74 news stories on disarmament and non-proliferation, ranging from meetings of the Agency to an interview with former United States Secretary of State George Shultz about the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization to coverage of the Conference on Disarmament, held in Geneva, were prepared and distributed to broadcasters worldwide through UNifeed.

61. The Webcast Unit covered various meetings and events aimed at strengthening peace and security through disarmament, from meetings on nuclear disarmament to meetings on preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. More than 200 videos were made available live and on-demand on the United Nations Web Television website between July 2014 and June 2016. Disarmament-related videos are available at http://webtv.un.org/search?term=Disarmament.

62. United Nations Photo covered the full range of meetings and events held at Headquarters, with more than 175 related photos captioned and posted on the United Nations website. In addition, the Multimedia Resources Unit of the Department of Public Information maintained a spotlight gallery, entitled "Disarmament and the UN", highlighting selected photos from its collection. In addition, some 70 video and audio records of material related to disarmament and non-proliferation from Headquarters and the field were posted on the audiovisual library website.

63. The Department provided comprehensive coverage of open intergovernmental meetings, press conferences and major statements related to disarmament through its Meetings Coverage Section. During the reporting period, the Section issued more than 315 press releases relating to disarmament, in English and French, including 140 detailed, real-time summaries of intergovernmental meetings and some 90 statements by the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General.

B. Public affairs, civil society and non-governmental organizations

64. During the reporting period, the Non-Governmental Organization Relations and Advocacy Section of the Department promoted the launch of the educational publication *Action for Disarmament: 10 Things You Can Do*. The book, published in collaboration with the Office, highlights 10 practical actions young people can take to raise awareness of disarmament and non-proliferation issues. It was made available in Korean, through a partnership with the non-governmental organization, the Hope to the Future Association.

65. Between 1 July 2014 and 24 March 2016, the iSeek team published 20 stories from the Mine Action Service and 5 stories from the Office, supporting efforts to share information on demining and disarmament. The Service was also featured on the home page of iSeek, in the regular feature known as "In the Spotlight".

66. The Visitors Services of the Department disseminated information on disarmament and non-proliferation in a wide range of ways. More than 370,000 visitors participated in guided tours of Headquarters and were sensitized about the work of the United Nations on disarmament. As part of the visit, tour guides share information provided by the Office on spending on arms and how international peace and security is supported by the work of the United Nations on arms regulations and disarmament, while highlighting the adoption and ratification of relevant treaties and conventions. Tour guides regularly receive briefings by disarmament experts to keep them abreast of timely topics and activities on the disarmament agenda, including the work of the relevant bodies and offices involved in disarmament and non-proliferation. In December 2015, *hibakusha* (atomic bomb survivors) of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki shared their personal testimonies with the tour guides with regard to the effects of the atomic bombings. Their testimonies are a powerful advocacy tool for a world free of nuclear weapons.

67. Disarmament-related visual displays continued to be an important part of the tour route at Headquarters. Small models of pre-assembled air- and sea-based weapons, as well as wall pictures related to the Arms Trade Treaty have been added to the disarmament exhibit, helping tour guides explain how the Treaty sets out to regulate the international trade of a wide range of conventional light and heavy weaponry.

68. During the period under review, the Group Programmes Unit in New York conducted 29 briefings covering the topic of disarmament and non-proliferation to 881 participants. The briefings were conducted by nine speakers from the Office, one from the International Atomic Energy Agency, one from the Disarmament and Peace Affairs Branch of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and one from the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

69. In Geneva, Nairobi, and Vienna the Visitors Services at those duty stations conducted guided tours to approximately 15,000 visitors a month and briefed them on the work of the Organization on disarmament and non-proliferation. In Vienna, the tours focus in particular on the work of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which are both headquartered there. In Geneva, the tours provide information on the Conference on Disarmament, based in Geneva, which is the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community and at which the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty were successfully negotiated. Exhibits with artefacts and photos from Hiroshima and Nagasaki are also discussed during the tours in Geneva and Vienna, whereas, in Nairobi, tours touch upon the impact of mines and unexploded ordnance on victims and their crippling effect on economies. Such discussions help tour guides to illustrate the devastating results of nuclear weapons, mines and other small arms and to educate the public on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. In addition, during the reporting period, the Visitors Service in Vienna organized 170 lectures by speakers from the Agency and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization for an estimated 3,100 participants.

C. Printed materials

70. United Nations work on disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and related fields features prominently in the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, the annual reference work on the activities of the Organization.

71. The April 2016 issue of the *UN Chronicle*, focusing on the theme "Implementing the 2030 Agenda: the challenge of conflict", featured an article entitled "Silencing the guns in Africa: a pathway to the Sustainable Development Goals". In the article, the Head of the African Union Commission Defence and Security Division, Tarek A. Sharif, outlined efforts to end conflict in Africa by 2020 through effective disarmament and arms control, among other means. The article highlighted the interdependence between sustainable development and conflict prevention and resolution, particularly in Africa.

D. Elimination of the chemical weapons programme in the Syrian Arab Republic

72. The Department of Public Information supported the communications activities of the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, established by the Security Council in September 2013, including by maintaining its website and providing logistics and media relations support to the Special Coordinator of the Joint Mission.

73. Following the establishment by the Security Council, in its resolution 2235 (2015), of a joint investigative mechanism to identify to the greatest extent feasible individuals, entities, groups or governments that were perpetrators, organizers, sponsors or otherwise involved in the use of chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Department designed and maintained a section dedicated to the

mechanism on its News Focus: Syrian Arab Republic webpage, available at www.un.org/apps/news/infocusRel.asp?infocusID=146&Body=Syria&Body1=.

E. United Nations Information centres, services and offices

74. The Department's global network of 63 United Nations information centres, services and offices continued to carry out information activities related to disarmament and arms control through media outreach, the production and dissemination of information materials in local languages, the organizing of special events, exhibitions, seminars and conferences and the commemoration of relevant international days and observances. In collaboration with the Office, the Department promoted through its global networks of information centres the United Nations Poster for Peace Contest, from 24 October 2015 to 24 January 2016, to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the first General Assembly resolution, which established the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction. The contest was promoted through social media platforms and traditional news channels.

F. Observances of international days

International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

75. To commemorate the 2015 International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, the United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo reproduced videos of the Mine Action Service with Japanese subtitles, including *Betty*, a film narrated by the Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards, Daniel Craig.

76. The United Nations Information Centre in Beirut observed the International Day by publishing an article entitled "Window on the United Nations" in the daily newspaper *Al-Mustaqbal* to educate readers on mine awareness and mine action. The Italian desk office of the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe, in Brussels, in cooperation with the Italian Committee of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, organized an exhibit in Rome on mine awareness featuring a project involving pupils from educational institutions in Gaza and Italy.

Day of Remembrance for All Victims of Chemical Warfare

77. The United Nations Information Centre in Tehran, in cooperation with the Society for Chemical Weapons Victims Support and the Tehran Peace Museum, organized a ceremony to mark the 2015 Day of Remembrance for All Victims of Chemical Warfare. The ceremony included addresses and messages from the Vice President/Head of the Martyrs and War Veterans Affairs Foundation of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The video address by the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons was screened for participants, who included journalists, diplomats, victims of chemical attacks and their relatives.

International Day against Nuclear Tests

78. At Headquarters, the Department provided support to the Office, the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations and the Office of the President of the General Assembly to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests on 29 August, in 2014 and 2015. The Department set up and populated the website for the International Day and conducted media relations for the events, including producing a press release and reaching out to media outlets to seek coverage. Events included the opening ceremony followed by a high-level panel featuring experts in the field of arms control and non-proliferation. In 2014, the panel discussed the theme "Path to zero: the role of the United Nations in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation". In 2015, the panel focused on the theme "Towards zero: resolving the contradictions".

79. The United Nations Information Centre in Moscow organized a panel discussion on "The role of anti-nuclear movement in the modern world" in 2014. Experts from Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation discussed a range of issues, including how to strengthen the international framework for nuclear security and the peaceful use of atomic energy. Participants stressed the significance of promoting global nuclear disarmament.

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

80. In partnership with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the United Nations Information Centre in Canberra celebrated the first observance of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September 2014. The event highlighted the human impact of nuclear weapons and presented multilateral negotiations on disarmament as a collective responsibility to ensure a sustainable world for future generations. Discussions focused on the international negotiation process for nuclear disarmament, the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent and a treaty to ban the use of nuclear weapons.

81. In Japan, the 2015 observance of the International Day coincided with the seventieth year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was commemorated with solemn observances and a panel discussion organized by the United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo in cooperation with the non-governmental organization Peace Boat. The panel discussion included young people from Hiroshima and atomic bomb survivors, as well as government officials and disarmament experts. Peace Boat also collaborated with the United Nations Information Centre in Panama City and the not-for-profit organization Fundación Ciudad del Saber to organize and sponsor a forum with survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki to educate participants on the human cost of nuclear weapons. Interviews with survivors were publicized through local websites and on the main local television news programme during prime time periods.

82. In November 2015, an exhibition on the devastation of the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki opened at the Vienna International Centre, organized by the United Nations Information Service in Vienna. Artefacts exposed to the effects of the atomic blasts were displayed and are now part of an exhibition on the guided tours of the Centre.

83. In collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Information Centre in Nairobi organized a poster

exhibition entitled "70 years later: atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki" in August 2015 for schoolchildren and the general public.

84. The United Nations office in Yerevan, together with the Armenian United Nations Association, organized an educational outreach programme for students of Yerevan State University to mark the International Day of Peace and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

Other activities

85. In addition to special observances, United Nations information centres continued to raise awareness of disarmament and related issues at special events and initiatives and in their daily activities.

86. In September 2014, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Senegal's National Commission for the Fight against Light Weapons and Small Arms organized a workshop on the draft law on the general scheme of firearms and the launch of a national campaign on the tagging, collection and destruction of weapons. The United Nations Information Centre in Dakar provided publicity and other media support for the event.

87. In July 2015, the United Nations Information Centre in Tehran, together with the Iranian International Studies Association, held a joint workshop for graduate students from Islamic Azad University on the history of the United Nations and on Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) relating to nuclear non-proliferation in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

VI. Conclusions

88. During the period under review, the Programme continued to focus its activities on information in the field of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and the arms trade.

89. In an effort to promote multilingualism, the Office relaunched its website with a vast array of content in all six official languages.

90. The Programme continued to invest heavily in electronic media, audio and visual materials, publications, events, activities and exhibitions to inform, educate and generate public understanding of the importance of multilateral action in the field of arms control and disarmament, in a factual, balanced and objective manner.

91. The Department has highlighted disarmament and arms control issues of topical interest, especially nuclear weapons and small arms and light weapons, in print, on the Internet and in film, television and radio, using its large network of information centres around the world and its outreach capacity. Its use of the celebrity appeal of the Messenger of Peace in respect of arms control issues continues to be effective.

92. The Office is grateful for the support it has received from Member States for the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Programme and appeals for continued support for its work.

Annex

Status of the Voluntary Trust Fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

I. Interim statement of financial position as at 31 December 2015

	31 December 2015	*31 December 2014*
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	480 591	103 622
Investments	–	200 913
Total current assets	**480 591**	**304 535**
Non-current assets		
Investments	–	177 354
Total non-current assets	**–**	**177 354**
Total assets	**480 591**	**481 889**
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued payables	2 295	1 294
Other liabilities	–	1 895
Total current liabilities	**2 295**	**3 189**
Total liabilities	**2 295**	**3 189**
Total assets and liabilities	**478 296**	**478 700**
Net assets		
Accumulated surplus	478 296	478 700
Total net assets	**478 296**	**478 700**

II. Interim statement of financial performance for the year ended 31 December 2015

	2015	*2014*
Revenue		
Voluntary contributions[a]	2 000	100 500
Investment revenue	2 663	2 227
Other	130	–
Total revenue	**4 793**	**102 727**
Expenses		
Travel	–	2 750
Operating expenses	–	5 311
Other operating expenses	2 715	(89)
Other expenses	2 482	929
Total expenses	**5 197**	**8 901**
Surplus/(deficit)	**(404)**	**93 826**

Source: Accounts Division, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts.

[a] The contribution of $2,000 in 2015 consisted of $1,000 from the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations and $1,000 from the Foreign Policy Association. The contribution of $100,500 in 2014 consisted of $1,000 from the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations and $99,500 from a private donor.